

Jim,

Bud/McDonald's book

11/6/75

HW

The big deal, complete with an elaborate buffet, went off as scheduled at the St. Regis at 10 a.m. this morning. TM was there and quite a number of other reporters. The pot bailed inside that room but not in any b'cast I've heard. Thank God. It was a lavish, expensive affair. Reports are that the buffet was excellent.

Reports also are that when it was over there was a tower of mincemeat: McDonald.

As of now I have no way of knowing how much - if any - of this can be attributed to what I might perhaps describe as my foresightedness. I have had an indirect report from one there, through the one who arranged it at my request. I have not heard from Waldron. I expect that unless the Times elects to have some fun there may be nothing. It was that bad. He was as glib as usual but this time McDonald had questioners who did not depend on him for news or leaks and who are predisposed against "assassinologists."

I also have a preort from Jon Newhall, who covered by phone. There was a regular p.r. outfit handling the affair. They were so well informed they had no knowledge of the books, except maybe its name. How many shot, shooters and other alleged facts was neither their concern nor within their knowledge or understand. But the buffet was good.

Newhall phoned Turner. Even Turner had and expressed misgivings about the book and McDonald. He noted that the time McDonald now gives for the beginning of his investigation is three years later than the original account. The difference makes it closer to Bud's time, I guess.

I misunderstood when Jon spoke of calling Bud. Thinking he hadn't I asked him not to. He said he had. I didn't waste a single shake when he told me Bud's comment. It boils down to reasonable, believable and interesting: endorsement.

After all this! ? *%\$#

Immediately Jon went into all those reports of Bud's alleged spook connections.

Nothing unreasonable about this with the context of endorsing an overt fake.

Zebra/Zahharas is not the publisher. McDonald is. Zacharias is said to have put up the money. All this is second-hand, remember. It is a paperback.

If there was any reasonable explanation of the delay from 1972 (new date) when McDonald allegedly got the confession I didn't get it but I gather the press found it not acceptable.

The lies to Bud appear to have been normal "security" precautions. Like Brennan's.

The scene of the confession has moved again, no doubt for "security." Not Canada, not Switzerland. London.

Herman Kimsey's right name was used at the press party and it is in his office that McDonald said it all began. With the Bud/Mexico silliness/picture. Bud's explanation, which as reported to me did not include Kimsey's death (and other than McDonald accounts for it) is that he knew Kimsey well.

If CBS was not there with cameras they'll regret it like the raven said, ever more.

McDonald is to be in Washington in a couple of weeks. If there is a party I know who'd like to be there.